GREENES
Groatſworth of Wit,
BOVGHT WITH
a Million of Repentance:

Deſcribing the Folly of Youth,
the falſhood of Make-ſhift Flatterers,
the Miſerie of the negligent, and miſ-
chiefes of deceiuing Curtezans.

Publiſhed at his dying requeſt,
AND
Newly corrected, and of many errors purged.

Felicem fuiſſe, infauſtum.

LONDON,
Printed by *Iohn Hauiland*, for *Henry Bell*. 1629.

TO WITTIE
Poets, or Poeticall Wittes.

A *Witte*, that runnes in this ſublunarie *Maze*, and takes but *Nature* for its *Originall*, makes *Reaſon* and *Iudgement* a payre of falſe ſpectacles, wherethrough to take an imperfect ſuruey of things *aboue earth*; and ſo leaping ouer the *Light* of *diuine direction*, falls hudwinckt into the pitfall of its owne Folly: For a *Wit* vnſanctified, is the Diuels *Anuile*, whereon he forges the engines of *ſelfe-ruine*. This is the reaſon, that ſo many *wit-worne Ideots*, after they haue deſcended frō the high ſtand of *Contemplation*, to looke into themſelues, are forced (the day after the Fayre) to howle out this old *Ballad* made in Hell,

Ingenio peryi, qui miſer ipſe meo:
Wit whither wilt thou? woe is me;
Th'haſt brought me to this miſery.

Vnder the wings of a *Wit naturall*, are hatcht theſe three *vnluckie Birds: Impudence*, *Selfe-conceit*, *Emulation*. *Impudence* turnes the Key of *Contempt*, and lets in *hard Opinion* to paſſe in *Iudgement* againſt the *Generall*, ſtill bearing o t her owne *Diſeaſe* with a ſtolne face: her *forme* is reflected

from the glaſſe of *Flattery*, wherein ſhe ſhewes fayre, others foule; and doting on *Figures* falſely preſented, ſcornefully kicks downe perfect *Knowledge* to the loweſt Region of Diſgrace.

Selfe-conceit; ſhe prodigiouſly ſtudies to put out the *Light of wit*, by ſeeming to know beyond the reach of *Reaſon*, as if ſhe had miraculouſly diſcouered ſome ſtand from off the earth, aboue the ſight of *Humanitie*, from whence over-looking al, makes it her owne *glorie*, hypercritically to reproue others.

Emulation; ſhe was nur'ſt by a ſhee-Toad; ſhee neuer lins ſwelling, till ſhe burſt her ſelfe, and poyſons others: She ſpeakes none faire, but a Barber; & him for feare too; leſt he ſhould ſhew her the tricke of a Cut-throat: She will be *none*, where ſhe may not be *beſt*: Shee's euer ſtrugling to clamber vp to the narrow top of abſolute *perfection*, and there to ſit alone, whilſt the deſertfull *Hopes* of true *Diſcretion*, willingly giue vp their *Care*, & ſilently content to ſtay *below*, or come *behind*. Theſe prenominated, are the three bold Bayards, that iuſtle and ſhoulder for a ſitting place in this Worlds wide *Court of Requeſts*, when *Vertue* and *Knowledge* know it better manners to ſtand and wait.

The beſtiall gutlings of this fulſom-feeding age, fall vpon a peece of piping-hot *Poetrie*, as on a *Chriſtmas Pie*, they dabble their durty fingers in't; ſtuffe vp their ſtomacks; belch out a ſowre *Cenſure*, and then regardleſly thruſt it to the lower end o'th table: ſo that, notwithſtanding ſhe come clad in the richeſt habit of *Skill*, and pranked out in the liuelieſt colours of *Conceit*; yet before *Cenſures* blinking eye, ſhe appeares but an ill-fauoured Dowdie.

Poetrie

Poetrie affoords better meaſure of *Charity*, than *Poperie*: For, to lend the world a furniſh of *Witte*, ſhee layes her *owne* to pawne; And for her *Humilitie*, that's ouerrunning full: for ſhee will kiſſe the ſhadow of a gowtie-toes ſhadow, and lie crowching at the foot of an *Epiſtle*, to watch the fall of ſome *Great-mans* graceful *looke*; and at laſt, for her labour, perhaps, be popt it'h mouth with a *Churles Almes*, that's *Nothing*. *Poetrie* and *Beggerie* are *twin-borne brats*: they haue one *fate* from *Birth*: one *fall* to *Death*; and both *vnfortunate*.

Of all other *creatures* your *Poet* liues moſt in, and moſt out of danger; and that in two reſpects: He lives moſt in danger, to periſh for want of *Competencie*; and contrariwiſe, he liues moſt out of danger, for euer being rifled; becauſe he neuer carries any thing about him, worth playing the theefe for: To be a *Poet*, and haue *meanes to bee ſo*, is not *to be* at all: for hee muſt put off *himſelfe*, and compoſe his *Parts* after the *vulgar forme*; be *new*, with mens *new affections*: he muſt not run a counter-courſe, out from the ſent of thoſe *Humours*, the preſent times approue: Aboue all, he muſt deifie *Pride*; ſhe muſt haue tapers of *ſupple ſoothings*, ſet vp before her illuſtrious *outſide*; no matter, if the *Soule* within, ſit poorely without *Light*. The true *Degree*, and iuſt *Height* of her ſwolne *Sublimitie*, muſt not bee taken right *as it is*, but as it *ſeemes to be*: after this, *Imagination* ſteps out, and (as *Iſis* Aſſe was) guls her with this beleeſe; That thoſe *Honours* are beſtowed on her, when indeed they are otherwiſe offered vp to the *painted Idoll* ſhe carries.

O Spirit of Diſtraction! That ſacred *Learning*, the happie *Birth* of Heauen; who ha's *Reward* and *Riches* dwelling within her ſelfe; ſhould be forc't by the furious Tyrant

rant *Want*, ſo to proſtrate her vnblemiſht *Bodie*, as to commit folly with *Earth*, and beſoile her State of *Cleerneſſe*, for ſo groſſe a benefit as Breath?

Wit may not vnaptly be termed, the worlds *goggle-eyde Lampe*; which illightning all, darkens its owne: and to feed others, deuours it ſelfe: *Wit* and *Honeſty* cannot abide each others Company; for *Neceſſitie* is the *go-betweene*, to ſet'em at odds. *Wit* is a skilfull midwife; it can deliuer its *owner* of a bigge-bellied Purſe, and bring the ſame man to bed of a foule ſhirt. There's an Engliſh Prouerbe, that *Wit runs a wooll-gathering*: and good reaſon two: for its commonly *thred-bare*. A *Poet* & his *Wit*, muſt be like *Adams* & his *Ape*; they muſt trudge together from place to place, to ſhew tricks for a liuing: and that too, (like a Witches) euer bare and baſe: Is not that *Wit* ſuperlatiuely ſottiſh? which disburſes large ſums of *Labour*; and takes vpon truſt ineſtimable treaſures of *Time*, for Doomes-day repayment, onely to purchaſe a *puffe of praiſe*: and yet at laſt, leaues to his Heyre nothing, but the Fee-ſimple of *Powertie*? That *Life* therefore is but *Death* aboue ground, which propounds *Griefe* its *Gaine*; and affliction its end and period.

But here I meete with an *Exit*: the *Prologue's* ended, and I muſt off: Now *Reader*, (for I will not call thee *gentle*, till I know whether thou wilt bite or no) behold a drie and *withered ſhadow*, which once was *Greene*, appeare in his natiue colour: new dipt, and a freſh gloſſe ſet on him: ready to enter vpon the Stage of triall, to anſwer vpon's Cu, and ſpeake his owne part.

Yours; if not, the cares taken,

I. H.

GREENES
Groatſworth of VVit.

IN an Iland bound with the Ocean, there was ſometime a City ſituated, made rich by Merchandize, and populous by long ſpace; the name is not mentioned in the Antiquary, or elſe worne out by times Antiquity, what it was it greatly skils not: but therein thus it happened. An old new made Gentleman herein dwelt of no ſmal credit, exceeding wealthy, and of a large conſcience: hee had gathered from many to beſtow vpon one, for though hee had two ſonnes he eſtemed but one, that being as himſelfe, brought vp to bee Golds bondman, was therefore held Heire apparent of his ill-gathered goods.

The other was a Scholler, and married to a proper Gentlewoman, and therefore leaſt regarded: for it is an old ſayd Saw; To Learning & Law, theres no greater foe, than they that nothing know. Yet was not the Father altogether vnlettered, for he had good experience in a Non verint, and by the vniverſall termes therein contained, had driven many Gentlemen to ſeeke vnknown countries: wiſe he was, for hee bare office in his Parish, and ſate as formally in his for-ſurde Gowne, as if he had beene a very vpright dealing Iurges, hee

was religious too, neuer without a booke at his belt, and a bolt in his mouth, ready to shoote through his sinfull neighbour.

And Latine hée had somewhere learned, which though it were but little, yet was it profitable, for he had this Philosophy written in a Ring, *Tutibs cura*, which precept he curiously obserued, being in selfe-loue so religious, as he held it no point of Charity to part with any thing, of which hée liuing might make vse.

But as all mortall things are momentary, and no certainty can bee found in this vncertaine world, so Gorinius (for that shal be this Vsurers name) after many a gouty pang that had pincht his exteriour parts, many a curse of the people that mounted into Heauens presence, was at last with his last Summons, by a deadly disease arrested where-against, when he had long contended, and was by Physitions giuen ouer, hée cals his two Sonnes before him; and willing to performe the old Prouerbe, *Qualis vita, finis ita*, he thus prepared himselfe, and admonished them. My Sonnes, (for so your mother said ye were) and so I assure my selfe one of you is, and of the other I will make no doubt.

You see the time is come, which I thought would neuer haue approached, and wée must now bée separated, I feare neuer to méet againe. This fortene yéres daily haue I liued vexed with disease: and might I liue fortene more, how euer miserably, I should thinke it happy. But death is relentlesse, and will not be intreated: witlesse, and knowes not what good my gold might doe him: senseless, and hath no pleasure in the delightful places. I would offer him. In briefe, I thinke he hath with this sole my eldest Son bene brought vp in the Vniuersity, and therefore accounts, that in riches is no Vertue. But you my Sonne, (laying then his hand on the youngers head) haue thou another Spirit: for without wealth, life is a death: What is Gentry if wealth bee wanting, but base seruile beggery? Some comfort yet it is vnto me, to see how many Gallants, sprung of noble parents, haue crouched to Gorinius to haue sight of his gold: O Gold, desired

Gold,

gold, admired gold: and haue loſt their patrimonies to Gorinius, becauſe they haue not returned by their day that adored creature? how many Schollers haue written rimes in Gorinius prayſe, and receiued (after long capping and reuerence) a ſixpenny reward, in ſigne of my ſuperficiall liberality. Briefly, my young Lucanio, how I haue beene reuerenſt thou ſeeſt, when honeſter men, I confeſſe, haue beene ſet farre off, for to be rich, is to be any thing; wiſe, honeſt, worſhipfull, or what not? I tell thee, my ſonne, when I came firſt to this City, my whole wardrope was onely a ſute of white cheepe skins, my wealth an old Groat, my wooning, the wide world. At this inſtant (O griefe to part with it!) I haue in ready coyne three ſcore thouſand pound; in Plate and Iewels, fiue thouſand; in bonds and ſpecialties as much; in land nine hundred pound by yeare: all which Lucanio, I bequeath to thee, onely I reſerue for Roberto, thy well read brother, an old Groat (being the ſtocke I firſt began with) wherewith I wiſh him to buy a groatſworth of wit: for he in my life hath reproued my manner of life, and therefore at my death ſhall not be contaminated with corrupt gaine. Here by the way Gentlemen, muſt I digreſſe to ſhew the reaſon of Gorinius preſent ſpeech: Roberto being come from the Academy to viſit his father, there was a great feaſt prouided, where for table talke, Roberto knowing his father, and moſt of the company to be execrable vſurers, inueighed mightily againſt that abhorred vice, inſomuch that he orged teares from diuers of their eies, and compunction in ſome of their hearts. Dinner being paſt, he comes to his father, requeſting him to take no offence at his liberall ſpeech, ſeeing what he had vttered was truth. Angry ſon (ſaid he) no by my honeſty (and that is ſomewhat I may ſay to you;) but vſe it ſtill, and if thou canſt perſwade any of my neighbors from lending vpon vſury, I ſhould haue the more cuſtomers: to which when Roberto would haue replied, hee ſhut himſelfe into his ſtudy, and fell to telling ouer his money.

This was Roberto's offence: now returne wee to ſicke Gorinius

rinius, who after he had thus vnequally diſtributed his goods and poſſeſſions, beganne to aske his ſonnes how thy liked his bequeſts, either ſeemed agreed, and Roberto vrged him with nothing more than repentance of his vnkindlife: to thine owne ſaid hee, fond boy; and come my Lucanio, let me giue thee good counſell before my death: as for you Sir, your bookes are your counſellors, and therefore to them I bequeath you. As for Lucanio, my onely comfort, becauſe I hope thou wilt as thy Father be a gatherer, let me bleſſe thée before I die. Multiply in wealth my Son, by any meanes poſſibly that thou maiſt, onely flie Alchymie, for therein are more deceits, than her beggerly Artiſts haue words, and yet are the wretches, more talkatiue than women. But my meaning is, thou ſhouldeſt not ſtand on conſcience in cauſes of profit, but heape treaſure vpon treaſure, for the time of need: yet ſéeme to be deuout, elſe ſhalt thou be held vile: frequent holy exerciſes, graue company, and aboue all, vſe the conuerſation of young Gentlemen, who are ſo wedded to prodigality, that once in a quarter neceſſity knocks at their chamber doores: proffer them kindneſſe to relieue their wants, but be ſure of good aſſurance, giue faire words till dates of payment come, and then vſe my counſe, ſpare none: what though they tell of conſcience, (as a number will talke) looke but into the dealings of the world, and thou ſhalt ſée it but idle words. Seeſt thou not many periſh in the ſtreets, and fall to theft for need; whom ſmall ſuccour would relieue. then where is conſcience, and why art thou bound to vſe it more than other men? Seeſt thou not daily forgeries, periuries, oppreſſions, rackings of the poore, raiſing of rents, inhaunſing of duties, euen by them that ſhould bée all conſcience, if they meant as they ſpeake: but Lucanio, if thou read well this Booke (and with that he reacht him Machiuels workes at large,) thou ſhalt ſee what it is to bee ſo fole-holy, as to make ſcruple of conſcience, where profit preſents it ſelfe.

Beſides, thou haſt an inſtance by thy thred-bare brother héere, who willing to doe no wrong hath loſt his Childs right:

for

for who would wish any thing to him, that knowes not how to vſe it.

So much Lucanio for conſcience: and yet I know not whats the reaſon, but ſomewhat ſtings me inwardly when I ſpeake of it. I Father, ſaid Roberto, it is the Worme of Conſcience, that vrges you at the laſt houre to remember your life, that eternall life may follow your repentance. But foole, (ſaid this miſerable Father) I feele it now, it was onely a ſtitch: I will forward with my exhortation to Lucanio. As I ſaid my Sonne, make ſpoile of young Gallants, by inſinuating thy ſelfe amongſt them, and be not moued to thinke their Anceſtors were famous, but conſider thine were obſcure, and that thy Father was the firſt Centleman of the name: Lucanio, thou art yet a Bachelor, and ſo keepe thee, till thou mate with one that is thy equall, I meane in wealth; regard not beauty, it is but a baite to entice thy neighbours eye; and the moſt faire are commonly moſt fond: vſe not too many familiars, for few proue friends, and as eaſie it is to weigh the winde, as to diue into the thoughts of worldly glofers. I tell thee Lucanio, I haue ſeene fourſcore Winters beſides the odde ſeuen, yet ſaw I never him, that I eſteemed as my friend but gold, that deſired creature; whom I haue dearely loued, and found ſo firme a friend, as nothing to me hauing it, hath been wanting. No man but may thinke dearely of a true friend, and ſo doe I of it, laying it vnder ſure locks, and lodging my heart therewith.

But now (ah my Lucanio) now muſt I leaue it, and to thee I leaue it with this leſſon, leue none but thy ſelfe, if thou wilt liue eſteemed. So turning him to his ſtudy where his chiefe treaſure lay, hee lowd cryed out in the wiſe mans words, O *mors quàm amara*; O death how bitter is thy memory to him that hath all pleaſures in this life? ſo with two or three lamentable groanes he left his life: and to make ſhort worke, was by Lucanio his ſonne interred, as the cuſtome is with ſome ſolemnity. But leaving him that hath left the worlde, to him that cenſureth of euery worldly man: paſſe we to his Sonnes, and

ſee how his long layed vp ſtore is by Lucanio lookt into. The youth was of condition ſimple, ſhamefaſt and flexible to any counſell, which Roberto perceiuing, and pondering how little was left to him, grew into an inward contempt of his Fathers vnequall Legacy, and determinate reſolution to worke Lucanio all poſſible iniury: hereupon thus conuerting the ſweetneſſe of his ſtudy, to the sharpe thirſt of reuenge, he (as Enuie is ſeldome idle) ſought out fit companions to effect his vnbrotherly reſolution. Neyther in ſuch a caſe is ill company farre to ſeeke; for the Sea hath ſcarce ſo many ieopardies, as populous Cities haue deceiuing Sirens, whoſe eyes are Adamants, whoſe words are Witchcrafts, whoſe dores lead downe to death. With one of theſe female Serpents Roberto comforts, and they conclude what euer they compaſſed, equally to ſhare to their contents. This match made, Lucanio was by his brother brought to the bush, where he had ſcarce pruned his wings, but he was faſt limed, and Roberto had what he expected. But that wee may keepe forme, you ſhall heare how it fortuned.

Lucanio being on a time very penſiue, his brother brake with him in theſe termes. I wonder Lucanio why you are ſo diſconſolate, that want not any thing in the world, that may worke your content. If wealth may delight a man, you are with that ſufficiently furniſht: if credit may procure a man any comfort, your word I know well, is as well accepted as any mans obligation: in this City are faire buildings and pleaſant gardens, and cauſe of ſolace, of them I am aſſured you haue your choice. Conſider brother, you are young, then plod not altogether in meditating on our Fathers precepts: which howſoeuer they ſauoured of profit, were moſt vnſauorly to one of your yeares applied. You muſt not thinke, but certaine Merchants of this City expect your company, ſundry Gentlemen deſire your familiarity, and by conuerſing with ſuch, you will be accounted a Gentleman: otherwiſe a peaſant, if you liue thus obſcurely. Beſides, which I had almoſt forgot, and then had all the reſt beene nothing,

you

you are a man by nature furniſhed with all exquiſite proportion, worthy the loue of any courtlie Lady, be ſhe neuer ſo amorous; you haue wealth to maintaine her, of women not little longed for: words to court her you ſhall not want, for my ſelfe will be your Secretary. Briefly, why ſtand I to diſtinguiſh ability in particularities, when in one word it may be ſaid (which no man can gainſay) Lucanio lacketh nothing to delight a wife, nor any thing but a wife to delight him? My young maſter being thus clawde, and puft vp with his owne praiſe, made no longer delay, but hauing on his holyday hoſe, he tricked himſelfe vp, and like a fellow that meant good ſooth, he clapped his brother on the ſhoulder, and ſaid. Faith brother Roberto, and yee ſay the word, lets go ſeeke a wife, while it is hot, both of vs together, Ile pay well, and I care turne you looſe to ſay as well as any of them all: Well, Ile do my beſt, ſaid Roberto, and ſince yee are ſo forward, lets goe now and trie our good fortune.

With this, forth they walke, and Roberto went directly towards the houſe, where Lamilia (for ſo we call the Curtezan) kept her Hoſpitall, which was in the Suburbs of the City, pleaſantly ſeated, and made more delectable by a pleaſant Garden, wherein it was ſituate. No ſooner came they within kenne, but Miſtreſſe Lamilia, like a cunning Angler made ready her chaunge of baytes, that ſhee might effect Lucanios bane: and to begin, ſhe diſcouered from her windowe her beauteous inticing face, and taking a Lute in her hand, that ſhe might the rather allure, ſhe ſung this Sonnet with a delicious voyce.

La-

Lamilia's Song.

Fie, fie on blind fancy,
It hinders youths ioy:
Fayre Virgins learne by me,
To count loue a toy.
When Loue learned firſt the A B C. of delight,
And knew no figures, nor conceited Phraſe:
He ſimply gaue to due deſert her right,
He led not Louers in darke winding wayes,
He plainely wild to loue, or flatly anſwered no;
But now who liſts to proue, ſhall finde it nothing ſo.
Fie, fie then on fancy,
It hinders youths ioy:
Fayre Virgins learne by me,
To count loue a toy.
For ſince he learnd to vſe the Poets pen,
He learn'd likewiſe with ſmoothing words to faine,
Witching chaſte eares with trothleſſe tongues of men,
And wronged faith with falſhood and diſdaine.
He gives a promiſe now, anon he ſweareth no,
Who liſteth for to proue, ſhall finde his changing ſo:
Fie, fie then on fancie,
It hinders youths ioy,
Faire Virgins learne by me,
To count loue a toy.

While this painted Sepulchre was ſhadowing her corrupting guilt, Hiena-like, alluring to deſtruction, Roberto and Lucanio vnder the window kept euen pace with euery ſtoppe of her Inſtrument, but eſpecially, my young Ruffler (that before time like a Bird in a Cage, had beene prentiſe for three liues, or one and twenty yeeres at leaſt, to extreme Auarice his deceaſed Father) O twas a world to ſee, how hee ſometime ſimpred it, ſtriuing to ſet a countenance on his turn'd face, that it might ſame of wainſcot prooſe, to behold her face without bluſhing: anon, he would ſtroake his bow-bent leg, as though hee went to ſhoot Ioues arrowes from his ſhins: then wipte his chinne (for his beard was not yet growne) with a gold wrought hand-kercher, whence of purpoſe hee let fall a handfull of Angels. This golden ſhowre was no ſooner rained, but Lamilia ceaſt her ſong, and Roberto (aſſuring himſelfe the foole was caught) came to Lucanio, (that ſtood now as one that had ſtard Meduſa in the face) and awaked him from his amazement with theſe words. What in a traunce brother? whence ſpring theſe dumps? are yee amazed at this obiect? or long yee to become Ioues ſubiect? Is there not difference betweene this delectable life, and the impriſonment you haue all your life hitherto endured? If the ſight and hearing of this harmonious beauty, worke in you effects of wonder, what will the poſſeſſion of ſo diuine an eſſence, wherein beauty and art dwell in their perfecteſt excellency? Brother, ſaid Lucanio, lets vſe few words, and ſhe be no more than a woman, I truſt youle helpe me to her: and if you doe, well I ſay no more, but I am yours till death vs depart, and what is mine, ſhall bee yours, world without end, Amen.

Roberto ſmiling at his ſimpleneſſe helpt him to gather vp his dropt gold, and without any more circumſtance led him to Lamilia's houſe, for of ſuch places it may be ſaid, as of hell;

Noctes atque dies patet atri ianua Ditis.

For their doores are euer open to entice youth to deſtruction.

They were no ſoner entred, but Lamilia her ſelfe like a ſecond Helen, court-like begins to ſalute Roberto, yet did her wandring eye glance often at Lucanio: the effect of her entertainment conſiſted in theſe termes, that to her ſimple houſe Seignior Roberto was welcome, and his brother the better welcome for his ſake: albeit his good report confirmed by his preſent demeanor, were of it ſelfe enough to giue him deſerued entertainment in any place, how honourable ſoeuer: mutuall thanks returned, they led this prodigall Child into a parlor garniſhed with goodly portraicture of amiable perſonages, neere which, an excellent conſort of muſicke began at their entrance to play. Lamilia ſeeing Lucanio ſhamefaſt, tooke him by the hand, and tenderly wringing him, vſed theſe words. Beleeue me Gentleman, I am very ſorry that our rude entertainement is ſuch, as no way may worke your content: for this I haue noted ſince your firſt entring, that your countenance hath bin heauy, & the face being the glaſſe of the heart, aſſures me the ſame is not quiet: would ye wiſh any thing here that might content you, ſay but the word, & aſſure ye of preſent deliuerance to effect your full delight. Lucanio, being ſo far in loue, as he perſwaded himſelfe without her grant he could not liue, had a good meaning to vtter his minde, but wanting fit words, he ſtood like a trewant that lackt a Prompter, or a Player, that being out of his part at his firſt entrance, is faine to haue the booke to ſpeake what he ſhould performe: Which Roberto perceiuing, replied thus in his behalfe. Madam, The Sunnes brightneſſe dazleth the beholders eyes: the Maieſty of Gods, amazed humane men: Tully Prince of Orators, once fainted, though his cauſe was good, and he that tamed monſters, ſtood amazed at beauties ornaments: then blame not this young man though he replied not, for hee is blinded with the beauty of your Sunne-darkening eyes, made mute with the celeſtiall Organe of your voyce, & feare of that rich ambuſh of amber-coloured darts, whoſe points are leueld againſt his heart. Mel Seignior Roberto ſaid ſhe, how euer you interpret their ſharpe leuell, aſſure they are not bent

ſo

to doe him hurt, e but that modeſty blinds vs poore Maidens from vttering the inward ſorrow of our minds, perchaunce the cauſe of griefe is ours, how euer men doe colour, for as I am a Virgin I proteſt, (and therewithall ſhe tainted her cheekes with a vermilion bluſh) I neuer ſaw Gentleman in my life, in my eye, ſo gracious as is Lucanio; onely that is my griefe, that eyther I am deſpiſed, for that hee ſcornes for to ſpeake, or elſe (which is my greater ſorrow) I feare hee cannot ſpeake. Not ſpeake Gentlewoman quoth Lucanio? that were a ieſt indeed: yes, I thanke God I am ſound of winde and limbe, onely my heart is not as it was wont: but and you be as good as your word, that will ſoone be well, and ſo craving ye of more acquaintance, in token of my plaine meaning, receiue this Diamond, which my old Father loued dearely, and with that deliuered her a Ring, wherein was a pointed Diamond of wonderfull worth. Which ſhe accepting with a low conge, returned him a like Riband for a fauour, tied with a True-louers knot, which he faſtened vnder a faire Jewell on his Beauer felt.

After this *Diomedis & Glauci permutatio*, my young maſter waxed cranke, and the muſicke continuing, was very forward in dauncing, to ſhew his cunning: and ſo deſiring them to play on a horne pipe, layd on the pauement luſtily with his leaden heeles, corretting like a ſteed of Seignior Roccos teaching; and wanted nothing but bels, to be a Hobby-horſe in a morrice. Yet was he ſoothed in his folly, and what euer he did, Lamilia counted excellent: her praiſe made him proud, inſomuch, that if he had not beene intreated, he would rather haue dyed in his daunce, than left off, to ſhew his Miſtreſſe delight. At laſt, reaſonably perſwaded, ſeeing the Table furniſhed, he was contented to ceaſe, and ſettle himſelfe to his victualls, on which (hauing before laboured) he fed luſtily, eſpecially of a wood cocke Pie, wherewith Lamilia his Carnar. plentifully plyed him. Full diſhes hauing furniſht emptie ſtomacks, and Lucanio thereby got leaſure to talke, falls to diſcourſe of his wealth, his lands, his bonds, his ability

and how himſelfe with all bee had, was at Madame Lamilia's diſpoſing: deſiring her afore his Brother, to tell him ſimply what ſhee meant. Lamilia replyed; My ſweet Lucanio, how I eſteeme of thee, mine eies doe witneſſe, that like handmaids haue attended thy beautious face, euer ſince I firſt beheld thee: yet ſeeing loue that laſteth, gathereth by degrees his liking; let this for that ſuffice: If I find thee firme, Lamilia will be faithfull; if fleeting, ſhe muſt of neceſſity be vnfortunate, that hauing neuer ſeene any whom before ſhe could affect, ſhe ſhou'd be of him iniuriouſly forſaken. Nay, ſaid Lucanio, I dare ſay my brother here will giue his word: for that I accept your owne ſaid Lamilia, for with me your credit is better than your brothers. Roberto brake off their amorous prattle with theſe ſpeeches: With eyther of you are of other ſo fond at the firſt ſight, I doubt not but time will make your loue more firme. Yet Madam Lamilia, although my brother and you be thus forward, ſome croſſe chance may come: for Multa cadunt inter calicem, ſupremaque labra. And for a warning to teach you both wit, Ile tell you an old wiues tale.

Before you goe on with your Tale (quoth Miſtreſſe Lamilia) let me giue you a caueat by the way, which ſhall be figured in a Fable.

Lamilia's Fable.

THe Fox on a time came to viſit the Cray, partly for kindred, chiefly for craft: and finding the hole empty of al other company, ſaving onely one Badger, inquiring the cauſe of his ſolitarineſſe, he deſcribed the ſodaine death of his Dam & Sire, with the reſt of his conſorts. The Fox made a Friday face, counterfeiting ſorrow: but concluding that deaths ſtroke was vncuitable, perſwaded him to ſeeke ſome fit mate wherewith to match. The Badger ſone agreed, ſo forth they went, and in their way met with a wanton ewe ſtragling from the fold: the Fox bade the Badger play the tall ſtripling, and ſtrout on his Tiptoes: for (quoth he) this ewe is Lady of all theſe lands, and her brother chiefe Bellweather of ſundry flockes. To be ſhort, by the Foxes perſuaſion, there would bee a perpetuall league betweene her harmeleſſe kindred and all other deuouring beaſts, ſo that the Badger was to them all allied: ſeduced ſhee yeelded: and the Fox conducted them to the Badgers habitation: Where drawing her aſide vnder colour of exhortation, puld out her throat to ſatiſfie his greedy thirſt. Here I ſhould note, a young whelpe that viewed their walke, informed the Shepheard of what happened. They followed and trapped the Fox and Badger to the hole, the Fox afore had craftily conueyed himſelfe away, the ſhepheard found the Badger raging for the ewes

murther, his lamentation being held for counterfeit, was by the shepherds dogge worried. The Fox escaped: the ewe was spoiled; and ever since betweene the Badgers and the dogges, hath continued a mortall enmity: And now be advised Roberto (quoth she) goe forward with your Tale, seeke not by slie insinuation to turne our mirth to sorrow. See to Lamilia (quoth hee) you feare what I meane not, but howsoever yee take it, Ile forward with my Tale.

Robertoes

Robertoes Tale.

IN the North parts there dwelt an old Squire, that had a yong daughter to his heire, who had (as I know Madam Lamilia you haue had) many youthfull Gentlemen that long time ſued to obtaine her loue. But ſhe knowing her owne perfection (as women are by nature proud) would not to any of them vouchſafe ſauour: inſamuch that they perceiuing her relentleſſe, ſhewed themſelues not altogether witleſſe, but left her to her fortune, when they found her frowardneſſe. At laſt it fortuned among other ſtrangers, a Farmers ſonne viſited her fathers houſe: on whom at the firſt ſight ſhe was enamoured, he likewiſe on her. Tokens of loue paſt betweene them, either acquainted others Parents of their choice, and they kindly gaue their conſent. Short tale to make, married they were, and great ſolemnity was at the wedding feaſt. A young Gentleman that had been long a Suter to her, bearing that the Sonne of a Farmer ſhould be ſo preferred, caſt in his mind by what meanes (to marre their merriment) he might ſteale away the Bride. Herenpon he conferres with an old Beldam, called mother Combey, dwelling thereby, whoſe counſell hauing taken, he fell to his practice and drift, and proceeded thus. In the afternoone, when dancers were very buſie, he takes the Bride by the hand, & after a turne or two, tels her in her eare, he had a ſecret to impart vnto her, appointing her in any wiſe, in the euening to finde a time to confer with him: ſhe promiſed

the

murther, his lamentation being held for counterfeit, was by the shepherds dogge worried. The Fox escaped: the ewe was spoiled; and ever since betweene the Badgers and the dogges, hath continued a mortall enmity: And now be advised Roberto (quoth she) goe forward with your Tale, seeke not by slie insinuation to turne our mirth to sorrow. See to Lamilia (quoth hee) you feare what I meane not, but howsoever yee take it, Ile forward with my Tale.

Robertoes

Robertoes Tale.

IN the North parts there dwelt an old Squire, that had a yong daughter to his heire, who had (as I know Madam Lamilia you haue had) many youthfull Gentlemen that long time ſued to obtaine her loue. But ſhe knowing her owne perfection (as women are by nature proud) would not to any of them vouchſafe fauour: inſomuch that they perceiuing her relentleſſe, ſhe wed themſelues not altogether witleſſe, but left her to her fortune, when they found her frowardneſſe. At laſt it fortuned among other ſtrangers, a Farmers ſonne viſited her fathers houſe: on whom at the firſt light ſhe was enamoured, he likewiſe on her. Tokens of loue paſt betweene them, either acquainted others Parents of their choice, and they kindly gaue their conſent. Short tale to make, married they were, and great ſolemnity was at the wedding feaſt. A young Gentleman that had been long a Suter to her, bearing that the Sonne of a Farmer ſhould be ſo preferred caſt in his mind by what meanes (to marre their merriment) he might ſteale away the Bride. Herepon he conferres with an old Madam, called mother Combey, dwelling thereby, whoſe counſell hauing taken, he fell to his practice and drift, and proceeded thus. In the afternoone, when dancers were very buſie, he takes the Bride by the hand, & after a turne or two, tels her in her eare, he had a ſecret to impart vnto her, appointing her in any wiſe, in the euening to finde a time to confer with him: ſhe promiſed

the

ſhe would, and ſo they parted. Then goes he to the Bride-groome, and with proteſtations of entire affects proteſts that the great ſorrowhe takes at that which he moſt vtter, whereon depended his eſpecial credit, if it were known the matter by him ſhould be diſcouered. After the Bridegroomes promiſe of ſecrecie, the Gentleman tels him, that a friend of his receiued that morning from the Bride a letter, wherein ſhe willed him with ſome ſirteene horſe to wait her comming at a Parke-gate, for that ſhee deteſted him in her heart as a baſe Country hinde, with whom her Father compelled her to marry. The Bride groome almoſt out of his wits, beganne to bite his lip. Nay, ſaith the Gentleman, if you will by me be aduiſed, you ſhall ſaue her credit, win her by kindneſſe, and yet preuent her wanton complot. As how, ſaid the Bridegroome: Marry thus ſayd the Gentleman: In the euening (for till the Guests be gone ſhe intends not to gadde,) get you on horſe-backe, and ſeeme to be of the company that attends her comming. I am appointed to bring her from the houſe to the Parke, and from thence fetch a winding compaſſe of a mile about: but to turne vnto old mother Gunbeyes houſe, where her louer my friend abides: when ſhe alights, I will conduct her to a chamber far from his lodging, but when the lights are out, ſhe expects her adulterous copeſmate, your ſelfe (as reaſon is) ſhall preuent her bedfellow, where priuately you may repoſſeſſe her, and in the morning early returne home without trouble. As for the Gentleman my friend, I will excuſe her abſence to him, by ſaying ſhe mockt thee with her maid in ſtead of her ſelfe, whom when I knew at her lighting, I diſdained to bring her vnto his preſence. The bride-groome gaue his hand it ſhould be ſo.

Now by the way we muſt vnderſtand, this mother Gunbey had a Daughter, who all that day ſate heauily at home with a Willow Garland, for that the Bridegroome (if he had dealt faithfully) ſhould haue wedded her before any other. But men (Lamilia) are vnconſtant, money now adayes makes the match, or elſe the match is mar'd.

But

But to the matter: the Bridegroome and the Gentleman thus agreed, he tooke his tune, conferred with the Bride, perswaded her, that her husband (notwithstanding his faire shew at the marriage) had sworne to his old sweet heart, their neighbour Gunbeyes Daughter, to bée that night her Bedfellow: and if shée would bring her Father, his Father, and other friends to the house at midnight, they should find it so.

At this the young Gentlewoman inwardly vext, to be by a peasant so abused, promised if she saw likelihood of slipping away, that then she would doe as he directed.

All this thus sorting, the old womans daughter was trickly attired, ready to furnish this pageant, for her old mother prouided all things necessary.

Well, Supper past, dauncing ended, all the guests would home, and the Bridegroome pretending to bring some friend to his home, got his horse, and to the Parke side he rode, and stayed with the horsemen that attended the Gentleman.

Anon came Marian like Mistris Bride, and mounted behind the Gentleman, away they past, fetcht their compasse, and at last alight at the old wiues house, where sodenly she is conuayed to her chamber, and the bridegroome sent to keep her company, where he had scarce deuised how to begin his exhortation, but the father of his bride knockt at ẏ chamber dœre: at wẽ being somewhat amazed, yet thinking to turne it to a iest, sith his wife (as he thought) was in bed with him, he opened ẏ dœr, saying; Father you are heartily welcom, I wonder how you found vs out hœre; this deuice to remoue our selues, was wẽ my wiues consent, that we might rest quietly without the maids and bachelors disturbing vs. But where is your wife, said the gentleman? why here in bed said he. I thought, quoth ẏ other, my daughter had béen your wife, for sure I am to day she was giuen you in marriage. You are merrily disposed, said ẏ Bridegroom, what think you I haue another wife? I think but as you speak, quoth the Gentleman, for my Daughter is below, and you say your wife is in the bed. Below (sayd he) you are a merry man, & with that casting on a night-gown,

hée went downe, where when he saw his Wife, the Gentleman his Father, and a number of his friends assembled, hée was so confounded, that how to behaue himselfe hée knew not, onely he cried out that he was deceiued. At this the old Woman arriued, and making her selfe ignorant of all the whole matter, inquires the cause of that sudden tumult: When she was told the new Bride-groome was found in bed with her daughter, she exclaimed against so great an iniury. Marian was called in quorum: she iustified it was by his allurement; he being condemned by all their consents, was iudged vnworthy to haue the Gentlewoman vnto his wife, and compelled (for escaping of punishment) to marry Marian: and the young Gentleman (for his care in discouering the Farmers sonnes lewdnesse) was recompenst with the Gentlewomans euer during loue.

Quoth Lamilia, and what of this? Nay nothing sayd Roberto; but that I haue told you the effects of suddaine loue: yet the best is, my brother is a maidenly Batcheler, and for your selfe, you haue not béene troubled with many suters. The fewer the better, said Lucanio. But brother, I con you little thanks for this tale, hereafter I pray you vse other Table talke. Lets then end talke, quoth Lamilia, and you (Seignior Lucanio) and I will goe to the Chesse. To Chesse, said he, what meane you by that? It is a game, said she, that the first danger is but a checke, the worst, the giuing of a mate. Well, said Roberto, that game yee haue béene at already then, for you checkt him first with your beauty, and gaue your selfe for mate to him by your bounty. That is well taken brother, said Lucanio, so haue we past our game at Chesse. Will yee play at Tables then, said she? I cannot quoth he; for I can goe no further with my game, if I be once taken. Will yée play then at Cards? I said he, if it be one and thirty. That fooles game, said she? Wéele all to Hazard, said Roberto, and brother you shall make one for an houre or two: contented quoth he. So to dice they went, and fortune so fauoured Lucanio, that while they continued square play, he was no loser. Anon co-

sinage

ſinage came about, and his Angels being double winged, flew cleane from before him. Lamilia being the winner, prepared a banquet, which finiſhed, Roberto adviſed his brother to depart home, and to furniſh himſelfe with more crownes, leſt hée were outcrackt with new commers.

Lucanio loth to be outcountenanſt, followed his advice, deſiring to attend his returne, which he before had determined unrequeſted: for as ſoone as his brothers backe was turned, Roberto begins to reckon with Lamilia, to be a ſharer as well in the monie deceitfully won, as in the Diamond ſo wilfully giuen. But the ſecundum mores meretricis, teſted thus with the Scholler. Why Roberto, are you ſo wel read, and yet ſhew your ſelfe ſo ſhallow witted, to déeme Women ſo weake of conceit, that they ſée not into mens demerits. Suppoſe (to make you my ſtale to catch the Woodcocke your brother) that my tongue ouerrunning mine intent, I ſpeake of liberall reward: but what I promiſed, there is the point: at leaſt what I part with, I will bée well adviſed. It may bee you will thus reaſon: Had not Roberto trained Lucanio vnto Lamilias lure, Lucanio had not now béen Lamilias prey; therefore, ſith by Roberto ſhe poſſeſſeth her prize, Roberto merits an equall part. Monſtrous abſurd if ſo you reaſon, as well you may reaſon thus: Lamilias dogge hath kild her a Déere, therefore his Miſtreſſe muſt make him a paſty. No more pennileſſe Poet, thou art beguild in me, and yet I wonder how thou couldeſt, thou haſt béene ſo often beguild. But it fareth with licentious men, as with the chared Bore in the ſtreame, who being greatly refreſhed with ſwimming, neuer feeleth any ſmart vntill he periſh, recureleſly wounded with his owne weapons. Reaſonleſſe *Roberto*, that hauing but a Brokers place, asked a Lenders reward. Faithles *Roberto*, that haſt attempted to betray thy Brother, irreligiouſly forſaking thy wife, deſeruedly béene in thy Fathers eye an abiect: thinkeſt thou Lamilia ſo lewſe, to conſort with one ſo lewd. No hypocrite, the ſweet Gentleman thy brother, I will till death loue, and thee while I liue, loath. This ſhare La-

milia giues thee, other getteſt thou none.

As *Roberto* would haue replied, Lucanio approached: to whom Lamilia diſcourſt the whole deceit of his brother, and neuer reſted intimating malicious arguments, till Lucanio vtterly refuſed *Roberto* for his brother, and for euer forbad him his houſe. And when he would haue pleded reaſons, and formed excuſe, Lucanios impatience (vrged by her impertinent malice) forbad all reaſoning with them that were reaſonleſſe, and ſo giuing him Iacke Drums entertainment, ſhut him out of doores: whom we will follow, and leaue Lucanio to the mercy of Lamilia: *Roberto* in an extreme extaſie, rent his hayre, curſt his deſtiny, blamed his treachery. but moſt of all exclaimed againſt Lamilia: and in her againſt all entiſing Curtizans, in theſe termes.

What meant the Poets to inuectiue verſe,
To ſing Medeas ſhame, and Scyllas pride,
Calipſoes charmes, by which ſo many dide?
Onely for this, their vices they rehearſe,
That curious wits, which in the world conuerſe,
May ſhun the dangers and entiſing ſhoes
Of ſuch falſe Sirens, thoſe home breeding foes,
That from their eyes their venome doe diſperſe.
So ſoone kils not the Baſiliske with ſight,
The Vipers tooth is not ſo venemous,
The Adders tongue not halfe ſo dangerous;
As they that beare the ſhadow of delight,
Who chaine blind youths in tramels of their hayre,
Till waſt brings woe, and ſorrow haſtes deſpaire.

With this he laid his head on his hand, and leam'd his elbow on the ground, ſighing out ſadly,

Heu patior telis vulnera facta meis.

On the other ſide of the hedge ſate one that heard his ſorrow, who

who getting ouer, came towards him and brake off his paſſion. When he approached, he ſaluted *Roberto* in this ſort.

Gentleman, quoth he, (for ſo you ſeem) I haue by chaunce heard you diſcourſe ſome part of your griefe, which appeareth to be more than you will diſcouer, or I can conceit. But if you vouchſafe ſuch ſimple comfort, as my ability will yeild, aſſure your ſelfe, that I will endeuour to doe the beſt, that either may procure your profit, or bring you pleaſure: the rather, for that I ſuppoſe you are a Scholler, and pittie it is, men of learning ſhould liue in lacke.

Roberto wondring to heare ſuch good words, for that this iron age affords few that eſteeme of vertue, returned him thankfull gratulations, and (vrged by neceſſity) vttered his preſent griefe, beſeeching his aduice how he might be imployed. Why, eaſily quoth he, and greatly to your benefit: for men of my profeſſion, get by Schollers their whole liuing. What is your profeſſion, ſaid *Roberto*? Truely Sir, ſayd he, I am a player. A Player, quoth *Roberto*, I take you rather for a Gentleman of great liuing, for if by outward habit men ſhould be cenſured, I tell you, you would be taken for a ſubſtantiall man. So am I where I dwell, (quoth the Player) reputed able at my proper coſt, to build a Wind mill. What though the world once went hard with me, when I was faine to carry my playing Fardle a foot-backe: *Tempora mutantur*, I know you know the meaning of it, better than I; but I thus conſter it, it is otherwiſe now: for my very ſhare in playing apparell, will not be ſold for two hundred pounds: truely, (ſaid *Roberto*) it is ſtrange, that you ſhould ſo proſper in that baſe practice, for that it ſeems to me, your voice is nothing gracious. Nay then, ſaid the Player, I miſlike your iudgement: Why, I am as famous for Delphygus, and the king of Fairies, as euer was any of my time. The twelue Labours of Hercules haue I terribly thundered on the Stage, and played three Scenes of the Deuill in the highway to heauen. Haue ye ſo (ſaid *Roberto*) then I pray you pardon me. Nay more (quoth the player) I can ſerue to make a pretty ſpeech, for I was a country

Author, passing at a morall, for it was I that pend the Morall of mans wit, the Dialogue of Diues, and for seuen yéeres space was absolute interpreter of the Puppets. But now my Almanacke is out of date.

The people make no estimation
Of Morals, teaching Education.

Was not this pretty for a plaine rime extempore? if ye will yee shall haue more. Nay, it is enough, said *R*oberto, but how meane you to vse me? Why sir, in making Playes, said the other, for which you shall bée well paied, if you will take the pains.

*R*oberto perceiuing no remedie, thought it best to respect his present necessity, to trie his wit, went with him willingly: who lodged him at the townes end in a house of retaile, where what happened our Poet, you shall hereafter heare. There by conuersing with bad company, hee grew A malo in peius, falling from one vice to another, and so hauing found a veine to finger Crownes, he grew cranker than Lucanio, who by this time began to droope, being thus dealt withall by Lamilia. Shée hauing bewitched him with her enticing wiles, caused him to consume in lesse than two yeares, that infinite treasure gathered by his Father, with so many a poore mans curse. His lands sold, his Jewels pawnd, his money wasted, hee was cashierd by Lamilia that had coosened him of all. Then walked he like one of D. Humphryes Squires, in a thred-bare cloake, his hose drawne out with his heeles, his hose vnseamed left his feet should sweat with heat: now (as witlesse as he was) he remembred his fathers words, his kindnes to his brother, his carelesnesse of himselfe. In this sorrow hee sate downe on pennilesse bench, where when Opus and Vsus told him by the chimes in his stomacke, it was time to fall vnto meat, he was faine with the Camelion to féed vpon the ayre, and make patience his repast.

While he was at his feast, Lamilia came flaunting by, garnish

niſhed with the iewels, whereof ſhe beguiled him, which ſight ſerued to cloſe his ſtomacke after his cold cheare, Roberto hearing of his brothers beggery, albeit he had little remorſe of his miſerable ſtate, yet did he ſeeke him out, to vſe him as a property, whereby Lucanio was ſomewhat prouided for. But being of ſimple nature, he ſerued but for a blocke to whet Robertoes wit on: which the poore ſoule perceiuing, he forſooke all other hopes of life, and fell to be a notorious Pander, in which deteſted courſe he continued till death. But Roberto now famouſed for an Arch-play-making Poet, his purſe like the ſea, ſometime ſwell, anon like the ſame ſea fell to a low ebbe, yet ſeldome he wanted, his labours were ſo well eſteemed. Marry this rule he kept, what euer he fingered aforehand, was the certaine meanes to vnbinde a bargaine; and being aſked why he ſo sleightly dealt with them that did him good? It becomes me, ſaith he, to be contrary to the world, for commonly when vulgar men receiue earneſt, they doe performe; when I am paid any thing before hand, I breake my promiſe. He had ſhift of lodgings, where in euery place his hoſteſſe writ vp the woefull remembrance of him; his Laundreſſe and his boy, for they were euer in his houſhold, beſides retayners in ſundry other places. His company were lightly the lewdeſt perſons in the land, apt for pilfery, periury, forgery, or any villany. Of theſe he knew the caſt to cogge at cards, couſin at Dice, by theſe he learned the legerdemaines of nips, foyſts, conicatchers, crosbiters, lifts, high Lawyers, and all the rabble of that vncleane generation of vipers: and pithily could he paint out their whole courſes of craft: So cunning he was in all crafts, as nothing reſted in him almoſt but craftineſſe. How often the Gentlewoman his wife laboured vainely to recall him, is lamentable to note: but as one giuen ouer to all lewdneſſe, he communicated her ſorrow fullines among his looſe trulls, that ieſted at her bootleſſe laments. If he could any way get credit on scores, he would then brag his creditors carried ſtones, comparing euery round circle to a groning O. procured by a painfull burthen. The ſhamefull end of ſundry his

con-

conſorts, deſeruedly puniſhed for their amiſſe, wrought no compunction in his heart: of which one, brother to a brothell he kept, was truſt vnder a tree, as round as a ball.

To ſome of his ſwearing companions thus it happened: A crue of them ſitting in a Tauerne carowſing, it fortuned an honeſt gentleman and his friend to enter their roome, ſome of them being acquainted wᵗ him, in their domineering drunken vaine, would haue noe nay, but downe he muſt ſit with them, being placed, no remedy there was, but he muſt needs keepe euen compaſſe with their vnſeemely carowſing: which he refuſing, they fell from high words to ſound ſtrokes, ſo that with much adoe the gentleman ſaued his owne, and ſhifted from their company. Being gone, one of theſe tiplers forſwth, lackt a gold ring: the other ſware they ſaw the Gentleman take it from his hand. Vpon this the Gentleman was indited before a Iudge, theſe honeſt men are depoſed: whoſe wiſdome weighing the time of the braule, gaue light to the Iury, what power wine-waſhing poyſon had, they according vnto conſcience found the Gentleman not guilty: and God releaſed by that verdict the innocent.

With his accuſers thus it fared: the one of them for murther was worthily executed: the other, neuer ſince proſpered: the third, ſitting not long after vpon a luſty horſe, the beaſt dyed ſuddenly vnder him. God amend the man.

Roberto euery day acquainted with theſe examples, was notwithſtanding nothing bettered, but rather hardned in wickednes. At laſt was that place iuſtified; God warneth men by dreames and viſions in the night, and by knowne examples in the day: but if he returne not, he comes vpon him with iudgement that ſhall be felt. For now, when the number of deceits cauſed Roberto to bee hatefull almoſt to all men, his immeaſurable drinking had made him the perfect image of the dropſie, and the loathſome ſcourge of Luſt, tyrannized in his bones: Liuing in extreme pouerty, and hauing nothing to pay but chalke, which now his Hoſt accepted not for currant, this miſerable man lay comfortleſly languiſhing, hauing

but

but one groat left (the iuſt proportion of his Fathers Legacie) which looking on, he cried, O now it is too late, too late to buy wit with thee: and therefore will I ſee, if I can ſell to careleſſe youth what I negligently forgat to buy.

Here (Gentlemen) breake I off Robertoes ſpeech, whoſe life in moſt part agreeing with mine, found one ſelfe puniſhment, as I haue done. Hereafter ſuppoſe me the ſaid Roberto, and I will goe on with that he promiſed: Greene will ſend you now his groatſworth of wit, that neuer ſhewed a wittes worth in his life: and though no man now be by, to doe me good, yet ere I die, I will by my repentance endeauour to doe all men good.

Deceiuing world that with alluring toyes,
Haſt made my life the ſubiect of thy ſcorne:
And ſcorneſt now to lend thy fading ioyes,
T'outlength my life, whom friends haue left forlorne,
How well are they that die ere they be borne.
And neuer ſee thy ſleights, which few men ſhun,
Till vnawares they helpeleſſe are vndone.

Oft haue I ſung of loue and of his fire,
But now I finde that Poet was aduiſde;
Which made full feaſts increaſers of deſire,
And proues weak loue was with the poore deſpiſde
For when the life with food is not ſuffic'd,
What thoughts of loue, what motion of delight,
What pleaſance can proceed from ſuch a wight?

Witneſſe my want the murderer of my wit,
My rauiſht ſenſe of wonted fury reft,
Wants ſuch conceit, as ſhould in Poems ſit,
Set downe the ſorrow wherein I am left,
But therefore haue high heauens their gifts bereft,
Becauſe ſo long they lent them me to vſe,
And I ſo long their bounty did abuſe.

O that a yeare were granted me to liue,
And for that yeare my former wits reſtorde,
What rules of life, what counſell would I giue?
How ſhould my ſinne with ſorrow then deplore?
But I muſt die of euery man abhorde;
Time looſely ſpent will not againe be wonne,
My time is looſely ſpent and I vndone.

O horrenda fames! how terrible are thy aſſaults? but *Vermis conſcientiæ* more wounding are thy ſtings. Ah Gentlemen, that liue to read my broken and confuſed lines, looke not I ſhould (as I was wont) delight you w̄ vaine fantaſies, but gather my follies all together, and as you would deale with ſo many parricides, caſt them into the fire: call them Telegones, for now they kil their Father, & euery lewd line in them written is a deepe piercing wound to my heart, euery idle houre ſpent by any in reading them, brings a million of ſorrowes to my ſoule. O that the teares of a miſerable man (for neuer yet was any man more miſerable) might waſh their memory out with my death, and that thoſe workes with me together might be interd. But ſith they cannot, let my laſt worke witneſſe againſt them with me, how I deteſt them: Alacke is the remembrance of my blacke workes, blacker than night, blacker than death, blacker than hell.

Learne wit by my repentance, (Gentlemen) and let theſe few rules following be regarded in your liues.

1 Firſt, in all your actions ſet God before your eies, for the feare of the Lord is the beginning of wiſdome: Let his word be a lanterne vnto your feet, and a light vnto your paths, then ſhall you ſtand as firme rockes, and not be moued.

2 Beware of looking backe, for God will not be mocked, of him that hath receiued much, much ſhall be demanded.

3 If thou be ſingle and canſt abſtaine, turne thy eyes from vanitie, for there is a kinde of women, bearing the faces of Angels, but the hearts of Deuils, able to intrap the elect if it were poſſible.

4 If thou be married, forſake not the wife of thy youth to follow ſtrange fleſh, for whoremongers & adulterers the Lord will iudge: The doore of a Harlot leadeth downe to death, and in her lips there dwels deſtruction: her face is decked with odors, but ſhe bringeth a man to a morſell of bread and nakednesſe: of which my ſelfe am inſtance.

5 If thou be left rich, remember thoſe that want, and ſo deale, that by thy wilfulneſſe thy ſelfe want not: Let not Tauerners and Victualers be thy Executors, for they will bring thee to a diſhonourable graue.

6 Oppreſſe no man, for the cry of the wronged aſcendeth to the eares of the Lord: neither delight to encreaſe by Vſury, leſt thou looſe thy habitation in the euerlaſting Tabernacle.

7 Beware of building thy houſe to thy neighbors hurt, for the ſtones will cry to the timber; Mix were laid together in bloud: and thoſe that ſo erect houſes, calling them by their names, ſhall lye in the graue like ſheepe, and death ſhall gnaw vpon their ſoules.

8 If thou bee poore be alſo patient, and ſtriue not to grow rich by indirect meanes, for goods ſo gotten ſhall vaniſh away like ſmoake.

9 If thou be a father, maſter, or teacher, ioyne good examples with good counſell, elſe little auayle Precepts, where life is different.

10 If thou be a ſonne or ſeruant, deſpiſe not reproofe, for though correction be bitter at the firſt, it bringeth pleaſure in the end.

Had I regarded the firſt of theſe rules, or bin obedient at ſ last, I had not now at my laſt end, bin left thus deſolate: But now, though to my ſelfe I giue Conſilium poſt facta, yet to others they may ſerue for timely precepts. And therefore (while life giues leaue) I will ſend warning to my old conſorts, which haue lined as looſely as my ſelfe, albeit weakneſſe will ſcarce ſuffer me to write, yet to my fellow Schollers about this Citie, will I direct theſe few inſuing lines.

To thoſe Gentlemen his Quondam acquaintance, that ſpend their wits in making Playes, R. G. wiſheth a better exerciſe, and wiſedome to preuent his extremities.

IF woefull experience may moue you (Gentlemen) to beware, or vnheard of wretchednesſe, intreat you to take hēd; I doubt not but you will looke backe with ſorrow on your time paſt: and endeuour with repentance to ſpend that which is to come. Wonder not, (for with thee will I firſt beginne) thou famous gracer of Tragedians, that Greene, who hath ſaid with thee like ỹ fool in his heart, There is no God, ſhould now giue glory vnto his greatneſſe: for penetrating is his power, his hand lyes heauy vpon me, he hath ſpoken vnto me with a voyce of thunder, and I haue left; he is a God that can puniſh enemies. Why ſhould thy excellent wit, his gift be ſo blinded, that thou ſhouldeſt giue no glory to the Giuer? Is it peſtilent Machiauilian pollicie that thou haſt ſtudied? O puniſh folly! What are his rules but meere confuſed mockeries, able to extirpate in ſmall time the generation of mankinde. For if, *Sic volo, ſic iubeo*, hold in thoſe that are able to command: and if it be lawfull *Fas et Nefas*, to doe any thing that is beneficiall; onely Tyrants ſhould poſſeſſe the Earth'e they ſtriuing to exceed in tyranny, ſhould each to other be

be a ſlaughter man: till the mightieſt out liuing all, one ſtroke were left for death, that in one age mans life ſhould end. The Brother of this Diabolicall Atheiſme is dead, and in his life had never the felicity he aymed at: but as he beganne in craft, liued in feare, and ended in deſpaire. *Quàm inſcrutabilia ſunt Dei iudicia!* This murderer of many Brethren, had his conſcience feared like Caine: this betrayer of him, that gaue his life for him, inherited the portion of Iudas: this Apoſtata periſhed as ill as Iulian: and wilt thou my Friend be his Diſciple? Looke vnto me, by him perſwaded to that Liberty, and thou ſhalt finde it an Infernall bondage. I know the leaſt of my demerits merit this miſerable death, but wilfull ſtriuing againſt knowne truth, exceedeth all the terrors of my ſoule. Deferre not (with me) till this laſt point of extremity: for little knoweſt thou, how in the end thou ſhalt be diſſited.

With thee I ioyne young Iuuenall, that biting Satyriſt, that lafely with mee together writ a Comedy. Sweet Boy might I aduiſe thee, be aduiſed, and get not many enemies by bitter words: inueigh againſt vaine men, for thou canſt doe it, no man better, no man ſo well: thou haſt a liberty to reprooue all, and name none: for one being ſpoken to, all are offended, none being blamed, no man is iniured. Stop ſhallow water ſtill running it will rage, tread on a worme and it will turne: then blame not Schollers who are vexed with ſharpe and bitter Lines, if they reprooue thy too much liberty of reproofe.

And thou no leſſe deſerning than the other two, in ſome things rarer, in nothing inferiour, driuen (as my ſelfe) to extreme ſhifts, a little haue I to ſay to thee: were it not an idolatrous oath, I would ſweare by ſweet S. George, thou art vnworthy better hap, ſith thou dependeſt on ſo meane a ſtay. Baſe minded men all three of you, if by my miſery yee be not warned: for vnto none of you (like me) ſought thoſe burs to cleaue: thoſe Puppets (I mean) that ſpeak from our mouths, thoſe Anticks garniſht in our colours. Is it not ſtrange that I, to whom they al haue bin beholding: is it not like that you, to

whom they all haue beene beholding, shall (were yée in that case that I am now) be both of them at once forsaken? Yes, trust them not: for there is an vpstart Crow beautified with our Feathers, that with his Tygers heart, wrapt in a Players hyde, supposes he is as well able to bombast out a blank verse, as the best of you: and being an absolute *Iohannes fac totum*, is in his owne conceit the onely Shake-scene in a Country. Oh that I might intreat your rare wits to be imployed in more profitable courses: and let these Apes imitate your past Excellence, and never more acquaint them with your admired Inuentions. I know the best husband of you all, will neuer proue an Vsurer, and the kindest of them all, will neuer proue a kind Nurse: yet whilst you may séeke you better Masters: for it is pitty, men of such rare wits should bee subiect to the pleasures of such rude groomes.

In this I might insert two more, that both haue writ against these buckram Gentlemen: but let their owne worke serue to witnesse against their owne wickednesse, if they perseuer to maintaine any more such peasants. For other new commers, I leaue them to the mercy of these painted monsters, who (I doubt not) will driue the best minded to despise them: for the rest, it skils not though they make a iest at them.

But now returne I againe to you three, knowing my misery is to you no newes: and let me heartily intreat you to be warned by my harmes. Delight not (as I haue done) in irreligious oaths, for from the blasphemers house, a curse shall not depart: Despise drunkennes, which wasteth the wit, and maketh men all equall vnto beasts: Flie Lust, as the deathsman of the soule, and defile not the Temple of the holy Ghost. Abhor these Epicures, whose lose life hath made Religion loathsome to your eares, and when they sooth you with termes of maistership, remember *Robert Greene*, whom they haue often so flattered, perishes now for want of comfort. Remember Gentlemen, your lines are like so many light tapers, that are with care deliuered to all of you to maintaine: these with wind-puft wrath may be extinguished, with

drun-

drunkennesse put out, with negligence let fall: for mans time of it selfe is not so short, but it is more shortned by sinne. The fire of my light is now at the last snuffe, and the want of wherewith to sustaine it, there is no substance for life to feed on. Trust not then (I beseech yée) left to such weake stayes: for they are as changeable in minde as in many attires. Well my hand is tyred, and I am forc't to leaue where I would begin: for a whole booke cannot containe the wrongs, which I am forc't to knit vp in some few lines of Words.

Desirous that you should liue, though himselfe be dying,

ROBERT GREENE.

Now to all men I bid farewell in this sort, with this conceited Fable of the olde Comedian Æsop.

A Ant and a Grashopper walking together on a greene, the one carelesly skipping, the other carefully prying what Winters prouision was scattered in the way: the Grashopper scorning (as wantons will) this needelesse thrift (as he termed it) reproued him thus.

The

The greedy miſer thirſteth ſtill for gaine,
His thrift is theft, his weale works others woe;
That foole is fond which will in caues remaine,
When mongſt faire ſweetes he may at pleaſure goe.

To this the Ant perceiuing the Grashoppers meaning, quickly replyed:

The thrifty husband ſpares what vnthrifts ſpends,
His thrift no theft, for dangers to preuide,
Truſt to thy ſelfe, ſmall hope in want yeeld friends,
A caue is better than the deſarts wilde.

In ſhort time theſe two parted, the one to his pleaſure, the other to his labor. Anon Harueſt grew on and reft from the Grashopper his wonted moiſture. Then weakly skips he to the meadowes brinks, where till fell winter he abood. But ſtormes continually powring, he went for ſuccour to the Ant his old acquaintance, to whom he had ſcarce diſcouered his eſtate, but the little worme made this reply.

Packe hence (quoth ſhe) thou idle lazie worme,
My houſe doth harbour no vnthrifty mates:
Thou ſcornd'ſt to toyle, and now thou feelſt the ſtorme
And ſtaru'ſt for food, while I am fed with cates,
Vſe noe intreats, I will relentleſſe reſt,
For toyling labour hates an Idle gueſt.

The Grashopper feeble, helples, and ſtrengthleſſe, got into the nert brooke, and in the peeling ſand digde himſelfe a pitte: by which he likewiſe ingraued this Epitaph.

When Springs greene prime arrayde me with delight,
And euery power with youthfull vigour filde,
Gaue ſtrength to worke what euer fancie wilde,
I neuer feard the force of winters ſpight.

When

When firſt I ſaw the Sunne the day begin,
And dry the mornings teares from hearbs and graſſe,
I little thought his chearefull light would paſſe,
Till vgly night with darkeneſſe enterd in,
And then day loſt I mournde, ſpring paſt I wailde,
But neither teares for this or that auailde.

Then too too late I prais'd the Emmets paine,
That ſought in ſpring a harbour gainſt the heat,
And in the harueſt gathered winters meat,
Perceiuing famine, froſts, and ſtormy raine.

My wretched end may warne Greene ſpringing youth,
To vſe delights, as toyes that will deceiue,
And ſcorne the world, before the world them leaue,
For all worlds truſt, is ruine without ruth.
Then bleſt are they that like the toyling Ant,
Prouide in time gainſt wofull winters want.

With this the Grashopper yeelding to the weathers extremity, died comfortleſſe without remedy. Like him my ſelfe: like me, ſhall all that truſt to friends or times inconſtancie. Now faint I of my laſt infirmity, beſeeching them that ſhall bury my body, to publiſh this laſt farewell, written with my wretched hand.

Felicem fuiſſe, infauſtum.

A Letter written to his Wife, found with this Booke after his death.

THe remembrance of many wrongs offered thee, and thy vnreprooued vertues, adde greater sorrow to my miserable state than I can vtter, o thou conceiue. Neither is it lessened by consideration of thy absence, (though shame would let mee hardly behold thy face) but exceedingly aggrauated, for that I cannot (as I ought) to thy owne selfe reconcile my selfe, that thou mightest witnesse my inward woe at this instant, that haue made thee a wofull wife for so long a time. But equall heauen hath denied that comfort giuing at my last neede, like succour as I haue sought all my life: being in this extremity as voyd of helpe, as thou hast beene of hope. Reason would, that after so long waste, I should not send thee a childe to bring thee greater charge: but consider hee is the fruit of thy wombe, in whose face regard not the Fathers so much, as thy owne perfections. Hee is yet Greene, and may grow straight, if he be carefully tended: otherwise apt enough (I feare me) to follow his Fathers folly. That I haue offended thee highly I know; that thou canst forget my iniuries, I hardly beleeue: yet perswade I my selfe, if thou saw my wretched estate, thou couldest not but lament it: nay, certainely I know thou wouldest. All my wrongs master themselues about me, euery

euery euill at once plagues me. For my contempt of God, I am contemned of men; for my ſwearing and forſwearing, no man will beleeue me; for my gluttony I ſuffer hunger; for my drunkenneſſe, thirſt, for my adultery, vlcerous ſores. Thus God hath caſt me downe that I might be humbled: and puniſhed me, for example of others ſinne: and although he ſuffers me in this world to periſh without ſuccour, yet truſt I in the world to come to find mercy, by the merits of my Sauiour, to whom I commend thee, and commit my ſoule.

Thy repentant husband

for his diſloyalty,

Robert Greene.

Felicem fuiſſe, infauſtum.

FINIS.

GREENES EPITAPH:

Diſcourſed Dialogue-wiſe betweene *Life* and *Death.*

LIFE.

STay grizly Thanatos, *pull backe thy ſpleene;*
Triumpher ouer Tombes, *what haſt thou done?*
To blaſt the Muſes Lawrell, *which was* Greene;
Minerua's *nurſe-child, great* Apollo's *ſonne:*
O what s'ſt made of Mold, thy ſtabbe can ſhun?
Sure th'haſt no eyes, to dart at randome ſo;
To ſtrike the Cedar, *let the Muſhroome grow.*

Where life is lon'd, tha'rt too too quicke to kill,
And to epitomize, with pangs, their ioy:
Where Life *is loath'd, tha'rt ſlow, and backward ſtill,*
And doſt adiourne their death *with* lifes annoy:
Thou Tyrant-like, the Beſt, *doſt ſtill* deſtroy:
To ſome thou art a ſterne vnbidden gueſt,
But who implore thy helpe, thou helpeſt leaſt.

DEATH.

Greenes Epitaph.

DEATH.

Why wouldſt creep longer on this duſty Round,
Where wealth's *but* want; *where Treaſures* won, *but loſt*;
Where all good Hopes, *in one* ill-hap, *are drown'd*
In ſome things, all; in all things, ſome are croſt.
And they but little, *that poſſeſſe the* moſt.
Vnmixed ioyes, *to none on earth befall,*
Who leaſt, ha's ſome, *who moſt, ha's neuer* all.

For that, muſt I his purer Part *vnſhroude,*
(A Kings command cannot withſtand my right)
And giue his priſon'd Soule, *midſt miſty Cloud,*
A larger Horizon t'eeblaze her light:
Her Beauty *then appearing Sunne-like bright,*
Shall ſhunne the earth, to ſhine (fore Angels eyes)
In Bliſſe, *aboue the Star-beſpangled skies.*

LIFE.

You ſacred Siſters, from whoſe Boſome's cropt,
A freſher Flower, *than by* Alcinous *bred:*
Through your Eies Lymbecke, let your loues be droſt,
(Though often true that more oft ha's beene ſaid,
The Fairer flower, the ſooner withered)
To keep him Greene, *with world out-wearing Rimes,*
To th'admiration of ſucceeding Times.

Hee,

Greenes Epitaph.

Hee, *whose gold-tipped Rare-attracting* Tongue,
With rare Cyllenian *Musicke charmed so,*
As marbles danc'd, when Thebes Musitian *sung.*
Let rowling Teares in Pleni-tides oreflow,
For losse of Englands *second* Cicero.
To make's not being, *be, as* he *hath beene,*
Greene, *neuer-wither'd, euer-wither'd* Greene.

I. H.

FINIS.